

# **FACT SHEET**

## **UPGRADING THE TILLAMOOK WASTEWATER FACILITIES IN 2007/ 2008**

**What's planned?** The City of Tillamook's sewer collection system and treatment plant is undergoing major upgrades over a period of several years based on Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) requirements. This Fact Sheet provides some basic information. More information may be obtained by calling or writing Arley Sullivan, Public Works Director, 503-842-2343, at 210 Laurel Avenue, Tillamook, OR 97141

**What problems currently exist?** Both the collection and wastewater treatment systems have problems as follows:

**Collection System:** The existing collection system is old and leaky. During the winter, when rainfall is heavy, the leaky pipes allow runoff and groundwater to enter the collection system, resulting in high flows at the treatment plant and the overflowing of manholes in some locations. Overflowing manholes are illegal and pose a danger to human health and the environment.

Septic tank effluent pumping systems that serve all of the businesses north of Hoquarten Slough on Highway 101 are old and have high maintenance costs. In addition, the 12<sup>th</sup> Street Pump Station is in need of upgrade and a major pipe known as the "Southwest Interceptor" needs to be replaced.

**Treatment Plant:** Many parts of the existing plant have been in service for 25 to 50 years. Mechanical reliability of the older units is poor, requiring increased maintenance. Flow and treatment capacity of the existing plant is no longer keeping up with the increased demands placed from an increasing population and more stringent DEQ treatment requirements. Concern over fisheries in the Trask River has led to a requirement to remove ammonia, which the existing plant is not capable of treating. The plant also has inadequate capacity to treat or store the waste solids.

**Are the upgrades really necessary?** Unless treatment plant capacity and performance is improved, the City will face fines for permit violations and could receive a moratorium on future residential development. While the City has realized good value from the current plant for many years, it is time to install new, more modern equipment to reduce maintenance costs, breakdowns, and to improve treatment efficiency.

Collection system improvements are required to eliminate sewer overflows, reduce routine maintenance, and to reduce the high flows during periods of heavy rainfall. Reducing the sewer overflows is a high priority. Replacement of individual pump systems on **North** Highway 101 can be done over a several year period to reduce the routine maintenance associated with these systems.

**How much of the existing plant will be utilized?** Essentially all of the primary treatment facilities (headworks and primary clarifier) constructed in 1998 will be utilized in the new plant. The Operations Building will undergo a remodel, but will be largely utilized. In addition, many of the other existing concrete structures are being reused.

**What new wastewater facilities are planned?** A planning process was completed and approved by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. The following phases of work are planned:

**Near Term Treatment Plant Needs.** A major upgrade to the existing Wastewater Treatment Plant is scheduled to occur from May 2007 through Late 2008. The improvements will greatly improve reliability, performance, and capacity of the facilities. Improvements will be made to influent pumping, headworks, biological treatment, secondary clarification, solids thickening, solids digestion, and to the Trask River Outfall.

**Near Term Collection System Needs.** A recent upgrade was made to the sewer line along Evergreen Drive. It is also planned that the 12<sup>th</sup> Street Pump Station will receive major electrical and mechanical improvements in 2007/2008 to improve its capacity and reliability. The treatment plant's improved pumping capabilities are also expected to alleviate some of the collection system challenges the City faces during wet weather periods.

**Phased Treatment Plant Needs.** While most treatment plant components are being upgraded in the near-term, there are some additional elements that may need upgrading during the 20-year planning period. This could include conversion to ultraviolet disinfection and installation of solids dewatering and/or effluent filtration. Such improvements would be in response to potentially changing regulations and environmental protection considerations.

**Phased Collection System Needs.** Once the treatment plant construction gets underway, the City will be able to allocate some additional time to prepare for collection system needs to eliminate more of the wet weather challenges including inflow and infiltration of groundwater / flood waters into the sewer system. Upgrading the "Southwest Interceptor" will be one component of future collection system improvements.

**What will the upgrade cost and how will it be paid for?** The treatment plant construction costs will likely cost \$10 million. The construction cost projections have increased significantly in the past two years as the construction industry has seen a major upturn in materials costs. Additional wastewater capital costs for treatment plant site land acquisition, Evergreen Drive sewer improvements, 12<sup>th</sup> Street Pump Station Improvements, engineering, and construction management will likely result in costs between Years 2005 and 2008 totaling \$14 million. The City has received two grants and two loans from state and federal funding sources to adequately finance all of the project costs.

**Who has made the decisions on how to upgrade the plant?** Decisions have been made locally with a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and a Public Advisory Committee (PAC) working closely with an engineering consultant and the Department of Environmental Quality. The TAC included employees from the City's Public Works Department and the PAC included over a dozen local residents who volunteered their time to educate themselves about wastewater treatment in order to provide advice during the planning process. The work of these groups allowed a Facility Plan to be produced that described the best way to improve the wastewater facilities.

**How much will this impact my monthly sewer bill?** In anticipation of these improvements, the City has had to raise rates to \$44 per month. Additional increases will be necessary over a period of years due to the significant increase in construction costs and to help finance collection system improvements. The increased rates allow the City to be able to pay back loans. In March/April 2007 the City staff and council will be working with a financial services consultant to determine what the timing and size of additional sewer rate increases may be. The City of Tillamook is not alone in seeing sewer rates increase significantly. Many other communities have experienced major sewer rate increases in recent years due to a combination of aging infrastructure, environmental concerns, new regulations, and increased operational and construction costs.